

Apocalyptic rhetoric is good when connected to solutions – the problem is apocalyptic rhetoric that just says we're doomed – proves perm solvency

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7-11-11 Apocalyptic Rhetoric, Mistakes, and Changing Behavior: How to Rhetorically Frame Climate Change Communications (Part 2) <http://karenlangbehn.wordpress.com/author/klangbehn/>

Given more time and insight, however, I need to revise these definitions, because their implications are definitely more critical than I had originally understood. Here's what I understand now, regarding the rhetorical differences between the two: the implication of "global warming" is that humans are the primary cause of rising temperatures, but also that *because* humans are the primary cause, they are capable of changing their behaviors so that they are no longer pressing the Earth's limits. "Global warming" implies humans' responsibility on multiple levels, and throughout time. If humans are primarily responsible for causing rising temperatures, then they are also primarily responsible for learning from their mistakes and changing their behavior. Responsibility, then, works both ways, and throughout time: past mistakes can be remedied, **if the rhetorical framing of global warming/climate change is communicated in terms that directly identify what can still be done – in the present and in the future – terms that speak specifically to public values, terms that allow for civic engagement, and terms that balance fear with opportunity.** If resiliency means turning threats into opportunities, then a rhetoric to communicate climate change to the public must be a rhetoric that enables civic engagement (communication of challenge appraisals); an apocalyptic/comic rhetoric because such a rhetoric remains hopefully optimistic that there is still adequate (although decreasing) time in which to transition to a sustainable system. As explained in previous posts, **when rhetoric neglects to articulate effective actions/solutions for productive behavior in response to environmental problems/global warming, or when it is founded solely on fear alone, without specific actions to remedy mistakes/unsustainable lifestyles, etc., the actions that do follow are maladaptive; they're not consistent, collective, or significant in addressing the change – global change – that is necessary in sufficiently addressing an environmental problem like global warming.**